



**EXPLORE!**

**Tailormade Classic Vietnam**  
15 days

Vietnam - Trip code TMVI3

## Tailormade Classic Vietnam

### Vietnam, from North to South

Vietnam from Hanoi to Saigon is a classic journey in South-East Asia, which takes you through the history, landscapes and different geographical parts of the country. This all-encompassing journey shows you Vietnam in its entirety – from the colourful, frenzied streets of Hanoi, where you can enjoy a cold beer at a street bar with the locals, to charming, waterside Hoi An and the buzzing lights of Saigon. This is a truly in depth journey, discovering all Vietnam has to offer.

### Enriching tailormade journeys – for you

This bespoke journey features some of our favourite spots in Vietnam. You can choose to take our destination experts' recommendations and travel just as you see the itinerary here, or contact us to add your own special touches; maybe a historic, boutique residence to stay in or a cooking lesson learning to make fresh, spring rolls, beef noodle salad or pho, a tasty Vietnamese broth. We're here to design your perfect holiday.

Call us on **01252 883 184**.

## Trip highlights

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

### TRIP PACE:

#### Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

# Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

## DAY 1 - Overnight flight to Vietnam

Fly to Hanoi on an overnight flight from the UK.

 None

## DAY 2 - Hanoi

Arrive in Hanoi and check-in at the hotel. The remainder of the day is free to make your first impressions of the Vietnam's capital city. You may choose to take a walk around the shores of Hoan Kiem Lake. Situated in the centre of the city and translated as 'Lake of the Restored Sword', Hoan Kiem Lake was named after a legend in which Heaven gave the Emperor a sword used to drive the Chinese from Vietnam; after the war a turtle rose from the water and grabbed the sword taking it to the depths of the lake. If you are lucky you may even spot some turtles in the murky water.



**Accommodation: The Ann** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available

 None

## DAY 3 - Hanoi sightseeing tour

Like a French provincial town with tree-lined boulevards, Hanoi is wonderfully nostalgic and a walk through the engaging streets of its Old Quarter provides an ideal introduction. Named after the various crafts and specialities of the city's artisans, each street bears such descriptive monikers as Paper Street, Silk Street and Basket Street. This practice dates back to the 13th century, when the city's original 36 guilds established themselves here, adopting a street each to differentiate them from their neighbours. The maze of alleys presents a fascinating venue to explore on foot and the area is known for its interesting 'tube' houses, whose narrow frontages give way to long rooms that stretch back. Street vendors tempt you with noodles, snacks and stir-fried delights from shoulder panniers, all adding to the charm of Hanoi's historic heart. Explore on foot and on an exciting cyclo ride which will also take you to Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and The Temple of Literature. Founded in 1070 as a Confucian temple, the Temple of Literature was also Vietnam's first university, the Chinese style architecture and courtyards are not to be missed. In the evening watch a performance at the popular water puppet theatre.





**Accommodation: The Ann** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available

 Swimming pool available

 Breakfast

## DAY 4 - Halong Bay overnight junk cruise

This morning you drive out towards the magnificent Halong Bay in the Gulf of Tonkin. Thousands of jagged limestone islands rise out of the jade green waters like the hairy scales of a submerged dragon. In fact Ha Long means 'where the dragon descends to the sea' as legend tells that the rugged seascape was created by the pounding tail of a dragon as he ran from the mountains into the sea, carving islands in his wake. Enjoy the romantic scenery while cruising among the islands. You may have the chance to stop at a beach where you can take a dip in the water. It is also interesting to see the curious assortment of boats, junks and wooden sampans, their sails hoisted, gliding through the waters.



**Accommodation: Bhaya Junk** (or similar)

 Premium Boat

 Breakfast Lunch Dinner

## DAY 5 - Overnight train to Hue


Spend the morning sailing, stopping to visit colourful grottos and swimming near deserted beaches. In the afternoon you'll transfer back to Hanoi and to the train station in time for your overnight train to Hue.

We love an overnight train, it's a great way to take in the scenery and get chatting to the locals. However, we are aware it's not everyone's cup of lotus flower tea. You could always upgrade to a flight between Hanoi and Hue. The extra cost of the flight and an extra nights hotel in Hue starts from £80 per person based on two sharing.



**Accommodation: Overnight train** (or similar)

 Standard Train

 Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Perfume River cruise

You arrive in Hué, one of the great cultural and religious centres of Vietnam, a quietly impressive place and a major highlight of your holiday. The Perfume River divides the city in two and it has been the inspiration for poets and painters for many centuries. In the afternoon take a trip by boat on the Perfume River to the Thien Mu Pagoda. This lovely monastery is the oldest in Hué.




**Accommodation: Eldora Hotel** (or similar)


▪ Premium Hotel

 Premium Hotel

---

 Swimming pool available

---

 Breakfast

---


## DAY 7 - Explore Hue's Citadel

To appreciate Hue's fascinating history you have a tour of the Old Citadel in the morning. The citadel/palace built by the Nguyen dynasty (early 1800's to 1945) has formal moats and impressive ramparts and was an exact copy of the Forbidden City in Beijing. Although most of the Inner City was destroyed during the Tet Offensive (1968), the vast outer walls and the West Wing remain and are an eloquent reminder of the palace's former glory. The afternoon is free to wander at your own pace. You may choose to hire a bike or wander the back streets and lively markets.




**Accommodation: Eldora Hotel** (or similar)


---

 Premium Hotel

---

 Swimming pool available

---

 Breakfast

---

## DAY 8 - Visit Cham Museum and Marble Mountains en route to Hoi An

This morning you enjoy a scenic drive across the spectacular Col des Nuages (the pass of Ocean Clouds) to Danang, once the centre of the important Kingdom of Champa (2nd century AD - 1720). You'll visit the Cham Museum to see the extraordinary Cham sculptures. Not far from Hoi An are the magnificent Marble Mountains which are dotted with Buddhist pagodas and shrines, and were a haven for the Vietcong troops and the scene of many battles. After, continue to the historic merchant town of Hoi An.




**Accommodation: Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa** (or similar)


---

 Premium Hotel

---

 Swimming pool available

---

 Breakfast

---

## DAY 9 - Free day in Hoi An

Today has been left free for you to explore at your leisure, bicycles in Vietnam are inexpensive and a great way to get out into the surrounding countryside or perhaps take a trip to the nearby beaches. Hoi An is also renowned for its many craft and tailors' shops. You may wish to take an excursion to Quang Ngai, the site of the My Lai Massacre Memorial. The massacre was a significant turning point in the Vietnam War and the horrific story is told through a photo presentation - an emotional experience.




**Accommodation: Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa** (or similar)


---

 Premium Hotel

---

 Swimming pool available

---

 Breakfast

---

## DAY 10 - Visit My Son

A further day is spent in this lovely historic town. This morning we take an excursion to the holiest and most evocative of Vietnam's Cham sites, My Son. The Chams were dynastic lords who rejected the authority of China in 2AD and established their own kingdom. Although they benefited from strong sea links with the rest of Southeast Asia the kingdom's interior could not supply sufficient food for a strong military force. For 1000 years they managed to stave off attacks by the Vietnamese and Chinese, before being overcome by the Vietnamese in the 15th century. Travelling along the track that leads to the site is slow and bumpy and through wooded hills, but the site is certainly impressive with several groupings of Cham temples to be visited. Nowhere are the fine masonry skills of the Chams more evident than at My Son, despite the fact that much of the site was bombed in the 1960s. The afternoon is free to enjoy Hoi An further.




**Accommodation: Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa** (or similar)

---

 Premium Hotel

---

 Swimming pool available

---

 Breakfast

---

## DAY 11 - Fly to Ho Chi Minh and travel to the Mekong Delta

After a short drive to Danang Airport you fly to Ho Chi Minh City, from here your journey continues south to Ben Tre in the Mekong Delta. Surrounded by lush and fertile land the area is home to small villages and swaying coconut palms. Taking a local ferry to a nearby village, you'll explore by cycle rickshaw. Later you'll board sampans, small Chinese wooden boats, and cruise along the narrow canals that shoot off the main vein of the Mekong River. After lunch at a local house you have some free time to explore the area further. Finally you return to Ben Tre by boat where you spend the night in a local homestay.

**Don't fancy a homestay? Why not upgrade to a Bassac boat for the night. Common in the Mekong Delta, your Bassac boat will be either a converted rice barge or modern version based on a traditional design. Comfortable cabins and plenty of areas to relax, this is a lovely way to explore the river. Extra cost is £85 per person, based on two sharing a cabin.**




**Accommodation: Ut Trinh Homestay** (or similar)

---

 Standard Homestay

---

 Breakfast

---

## DAY 12 - Mekong Delta to Ho Chi Minh

Spend the morning exploring the Nuoc Trong canal in the Mekong Delta, meeting some industrious locals, there may be time to see coconut processing and trading. You also have the option to walk or cycle along the canal to explore further. Later on you'll drive back to Ho Chi Minh City.



**Accommodation: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 13 - Ho Chi Minh City tour

Formerly known as Saigon, Ho Chi Minh is the largest city in Vietnam following its growth in the 1960s and 70s under the American occupation. In more recent times it was the seat of the South Vietnam government until the events that led to the country's reunification. This morning you have a guided tour of the city. Sights include a visit to the Reunification Palace, where the first communist tanks arrived into Ho Chi Minh City in April 1975. You will also visit the War Remnants Museum which provides an interesting though extremely emotive documentary of the Vietnam War and its atrocious war crimes. You'll also visit the Notre Dame Cathedral and take in some of the lovely French colonial architecture of the city. The afternoon has been left free.



**Accommodation: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 14 - Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels

Travel out of the city to the Cu Chi Tunnels. During the war this network of over 250 km of tunnels stretched from Saigon to the Cambodian border, and included living and storage areas, first aid centres and command centres. The hidden tunnels allowed the Viet Cong to launch surprise attacks on American troops and disappear unnoticed through the disguised trapdoors. You will have the opportunity to explore the tunnels and learn more of this amazing underground base, before returning to the city. The afternoon has been left free for you to do some last minute Souvenir shopping.



**Accommodation: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available





Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 15 - Arrive UK

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK.



Breakfast

## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 13  
Lunch: 1  
Dinner: 1



### Transport

Private car  
Cyclo  
Boat  
Train  
Flight



### Trip staff

Local guide  
Driver(s)  
Boat crew



### Accommodation

1 nights premium boat  
1 nights standard homestay  
10 nights premium hotel  
1 nights standard train

## Trip information

### Country information

### Vietnam

#### Climate

As Vietnam is a long, narrow country from north to south climate conditions vary considerably. The climate can be divided into three distinct patterns between the north, central and south regions. The climate in the north is generally humid and subtropical, although the winter months from November to March can be colder with temperatures from 10 - 15 degrees. Summer months, May to September can be quite hot with temperatures from 30 - 35 degrees. Meanwhile south Vietnam enjoys a tropical climate all year round, with little variation throughout the year (around 27 - 32 degrees), however May to November is the rainy season when short, heavy downpours are quite frequent. Central Vietnam lies somewhere in between. The coastal strip is usually dry and hotter from April to October while November to March is wetter and cooler. A light rain jacket and small umbrella are recommended year round.

#### Time difference to GMT

+7

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

**Religion**

Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism

**Language**

Vietnamese

## Budgeting and packing

**Country Information**

### Vietnam

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

**Dinner price**

£9

**Beer price**

£2.00 - 4.00

**Water price**

£0.5

#### Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Dong.

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

Carry your money in US\$ Dollars cash. You can also take GBP but US\$ are easier to exchange. (Dollar bills can be used in some hotels and shops; change is often given in local currency).

**Where To Exchange**

Most towns.

**ATM Availability**

There are ATMs virtually everywhere in Vietnam and in Cambodia, though we also recommend bringing cash.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Credit card's are widely accepted throughout Vietnam

**Travellers Cheques**

Travellers cheques are not recommended as they can be difficult to exchange

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Accommodation notes

**Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Premium



On Premium level tailor-made tours you will stay at comfortable mid-range hotels, chosen for their location, ambiance or local character. Your rooms will be clean and well-appointed, with en suite bathrooms and air-conditioning or heating as necessary. Premium level hotels normally have restaurants, bars and often other amenities such as a swimming pool and gardens, offering a good level of comfort at a reasonable price.

#### The Ann

Offering an rooftop pool, a restaurant and a bar, The Ann Hanoi is located just a short walk from Hanoi's Old Quarter. Rooms are spacious, comfortable and modern, perfect for winding down after a day in the busy city.

#### Bhaya Junk

Bhaya cruises offer four modern but traditionally designed junk boats all with comfortable cabins and facilities. There are between 15 and 20 cabins, all outward facing to make the most of the views. On-board you can enjoy a range of activities including fishing, tai chi and Vietnamese cooking demonstrations with your chef. There is also a spacious sundeck with sun loungers, a dining room and bar, and a small spa.

#### Eldora Hotel

The Eldora Hotel is a large boutique property in the centre of Hue, just a short walk away from some of the city's famous sights, including the Trangtien Bridge, the Dong Ba market and the Citadel. Rooms all have modern facilities plus there is a lovely indoor pool and Spa available.

#### Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa

Located close to Hoi An town the Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa is a large, beautiful property featuring hardwood furnishings and surrounded by lush gardens. There is a complimentary shuttle bus to Cua Dai beach which is just 10 minutes away and the hotel itself offers a swimming pool, spa, fitness centre and a restaurant serving Asian and Western dishes. Guest rooms are comfortable and spacious, with either a balcony or private outdoor space.

#### Ut Trinh Homestay

Ut Trinh Homestay is located on a small island near Vinh Long in a lovely setting within well-kept gardens. Rooms are basic with a bed, fan and mosquito net, plus en suite with outdoor shower. The homestay can accommodate up to 30 people so there it is a good opportunity to interact with other travellers while relaxing in your hammock. The homestay operates an honesty bar policy, meals are all freshly prepared using local ingredients and the family are happy to show you how to cook traditional dishes.

#### Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel

The Liberty Central Saigon Central is a business-style hotel within walking distance of the famous Ben Thanh market and local restaurants, and within easy reach of central Ho Chi Minh City. This 12-storey hotel offers well-appointed comfortable rooms. Facilities include a fitness centre and a rooftop swimming pool. Dining options include a restaurant and a Bistro Café with a daily happy hour.

#### Indulge

If you are looking for the best of both worlds, with adventurous days and indulgent nights, our Indulge level tailor-made holidays may be just the answer. On these tours you can enjoy busy days packed with adventure and activity, followed by relaxing evenings unwinding in the comfort of accommodation hand-picked for its high level of comfort and service. Some hotels are full of historical interest too: a converted palace in India for example, or a restored colonial mansion in Latin America.

#### Melia Hotel

A large, contemporary property, Melia Hotel offers spacious rooms and a wide range of facilities including casino, outdoor pool and spa. It is a short 10 minute walk from the city centre where you can find local bars, restaurants and shops.

#### Jasmine

The Jasmine junk is a relatively large boat with 22 cabins and four spacious decks, including a sundeck and restaurant. The boat has been designed in a traditional 1930s Indochina-style with lots of wood interiors, detailed ornaments and Vietnamese textiles. The cabins are en suite and air-conditioned providing a very comfortable stay for your explorations of Halong Bay. The junk also offers tai chi lessons or why not enjoy a cocktail at the bar?

#### La Residence

Located on the banks of the perfume river and overlooking the citadel, this former governor's palace has been converted into a deluxe boutique hotel. This large art-deco property overlooks the Perfume River with classically designed rooms, plus colonial style bar and restaurant. The hotel has a gym and spa, while rooms have complementary Wi-Fi.

#### Palm Garden Resort

Set in five hectares of unspoiled, tropical gardens featuring over 400 palm trees, this upmarket resort is a five minute drive from Hoi An's historical old town. All of the guest rooms have a stylish yet simple design, and each has a private balcony overlooking either the sea or gardens. Whether you want to enjoy the sea breeze, garden views or cool indoors there is a range of dining options and bars available. The resort also has its own spa, tennis court, fitness centre and pool.

#### Ut Trinh Homestay

Ut Trinh Homestay is located on a small island near Vinh Long in a lovely setting within well-kept gardens. Rooms are basic with a bed, fan and mosquito net, plus en suite with outdoor shower. The homestay can accommodate up to 30 people so there it is a good opportunity to interact with other travellers while relaxing in your hammock. The homestay operates an honesty bar policy, meals are all freshly prepared using local ingredients and the family are happy to show you how to cook traditional dishes.

#### The Renaissance Riverside Hotel

The Renaissance Riverside Hotel is a modern property offering a range of modern rooms with either city or river views. The hotel has a variety of bars and dining options, a roof-top pool, fitness centre and spa. Located near Ben Thanh Market and the

Reunification Palace, this is a great option for your Saigon explorations.

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

### Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

### Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

#### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

**Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## **Vietnam**

**Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on Malaria and Zika Virus. Although not compulsory travellers may also wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

---